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AIRGRAM

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FROM : Amembassy SANTO DOMINGO DATE: April 24, 1971
SUBJECT : Weekly Political Review No. 16 (April 16-22, 1971)
REF :
NAVY for COMANTDEF COM - 2
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1. Introduction.

Duvalier's death dominated the news of the week. In general, Dominicans have taken the news calmly. Although the military and other officials are concerned about the possible course of developments in Haiti, they are not alarmed about the immediate future. The issue of a higher sugar quota in the US preferential market continued to receive wide coverage in the press. In addition to the Dominican representatives who will testify in open

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hearings in Washington on April 26, other groups here who have expressed a direct interest in making their views known include the National Development Commission, the sugar workers' trade union federation FENSA, various colono organizations, the American Chamber of Commerce in Santo Domingo, and a group of three MIDA Deputies who plan to attend the open hearings on an unofficial basis. On the political side, the issue of police "repression" was aired again when it became known that groups of an organization called the "Anti-Communist Reformist Democratic Youth" had been established by the National Police supposedly for the purpose of eliminating selected extreme leftists. Although the period April 24-May 1 has been termed the "Week of Struggle" by various leftist student and other groups, prospects look good for a relatively quiet anniversary of the 1965 revolution. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

2. 6th Anniversary of 1965 Revolution

With the approaching anniversary of the 1965 revolution (April 24) and Labor Day on May 1, security patrols in Santo Domingo have been visibly increased... The Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD) announced a series of programs scheduled for its offices in various parts of the city on April 24, to commemorate the "glorious revolution of 1965." At the same time the PRD ordered its members not to take part in any activities not authorized by the party. The "anarchistic political policy" of some communist groups precludes PRD cooperation with them, the PRD announcement said. In Santiago three students reportedly were wounded by gun fire during clashes with a mixed security patrol which followed demonstrations commemorating the anniversary. (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment: As in years past, there will undoubtedly be demonstrations, micro-meetings, etc., but we anticipate no mass demonstrations or other major problems. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

3. Dominican Reaction to Duvalier's Death

The news of the death of Haitian dictator Francois Duvalier and speculation about the immediate political future of that neighboring country dominated the front pages of the local press at week's end. Although the First Brigade and Dominican Army units along the border were placed on alert status, no troops

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have been deployed to the border area from their normal locations. The Navy is patrolling the northern and southern coastal waters, and the Air Force is conducting air patrols along the border. MAAG and DAO contacts with officers of all three military services indicate that the Armed Forces are calm. (CONFIDENTIAL)

In a public statement, PRD President Juan Bosch asserted that Duvalier's death would not provoke an immediate uprising although he predicted "an environment of international intrigue and national unrest" in Haiti. Other political figures with whom we have spoken have not expressed concern about the immediate future in Haiti. Carlos SANCHEZ y SANCHEZ, the President of the Dominican Frontiers Council, predicted an exodus of Haitians across the border, an opinion contradicted by the Haitian Ambassador Clement VINCENT. The Secretary General of the Association of Haitian Newsmen in Exile said that many high officials of the former regime are preparing to take refuge in the D.R. (UNCLASSIFIED)

4. Alleged Rightist Terror Group Operating in Santo Domingo.

Reports that an organized band of rightist terrorists calling itself the Juventud Democratica Reformista Anti-Comunista is operating in Santo Domingo received considerable coverage in the press this week. Leftist/nationalist El Nacional charged that the terrorist group is linked to the National Police and published photos of alleged members of the band lounging in the parking lot of the Police Palace. Other sources also emphasized the association with the Police, claiming that the group uses police-owned vehicles, that members of the band appear daily at the Police Palace to receive instructions, and that members have illegally detained citizens who are later formally arrested by the police. The band has been accused of killings, assaults, and robberies that have occurred in the northern barrios of Santo Domingo. Leaders of the political opposition, ranging from the PRD to PQD, have publicly denounced the band and the PRSC has accused it of persecuting anti-government young people in general and one of its party leaders in particular.

When the furor over the alleged link of the terrorist groups to the National Police first broke, Police Chief Major General Enrique PEREZ y PEREZ issued a bland statement commenting that all citizens had the right to visit the Police Palace and denouncing the terrorist activities of the MPD. Secretary of

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Interior and Police General Juan René BEAUCHAMPS Javier, however, said it was "inconceivable" that the National Police could be associated with a band of young delinquents. On April 20, six young people (ages 15-21), claiming to be members of the group, sought asylum in the Mexican Embassy. They alleged that the police were recruiting, arming, instructing, and paying barrio youths to participate in a "war against communism." At mid-week Perez y Perez strongly denied police association with the band, and accused leftist political groups of sending the six to request asylum in order to discredit the police and the GODR. At his weekly news conference, President Balaguer said that the existence of armed terrorist bands could not be tolerated and that the National Police should take action against any and all such groups. (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment: The issue of armed terrorist groups linked to the National Police is a new and potentially dangerous factor in the tension caused by an apparent recent increase in officially-inspired violence. It is widely believed that the police are "shooting first and asking questions later" in a campaign against criminal and extreme leftist elements in the barrios of Santo Domingo. Most Embassy contacts claim knowledge that elements of the police are in fact connected with the so-called Juventud Democratica Reformista Anti-Comunista [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] The line between a "criminal" and a "leftist subversive" is often a thin one in the D.R. and if the present campaign against "criminals" should be expanded to include "subversive opposition," significant political repercussions might develop. (CONFIDENTIAL) 25X1

5. Criticism of New Broadcasting Decree.

A decree signed by President Balaguer in late March (apparently drafted by the National Commission of Public Spectacles and Radiophony) establishing new regulations for the broadcasting industry has caused concern on the part of newsmen, radio station owners and opposition political leaders. The Dominican Association of Radio Stations (ADORA) has formally protested 26 sections of the decree. One article which states that "no announcer will be able to transmit alarming news items concerning fires, cyclones, floods, etc. Unless the news item has been approved and duly authorized by the competent authority" has been singled out by the Association as dangerous and unconstitutional. ADORA President Jose BREA Peña expressed particular concern about the word "etcetera" and said it was not clear who

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would decide which news items were "alarming." PRSC President Alfonso MORENO Martinez charged that the new regulation is designed to "silence and frighten" news broadcasters.

Questioned about the furor at his mid-week news conference, President Balaguer promised to "study and take into consideration" the various objections to the decree, adding that the government had no intention of limiting "free expression." The President has in the past (most recently in his speech to the Inter-American Press Society last month) expressed concern over the possible use of radio to air "subversive propaganda."
(LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

6. Temporary Solution to UCMU Crisis in Sight

After a week of meetings and negotiations, important faculty and student elements at Santiago's Catholic University of Madre y Maestra have apparently given their qualified endorsement to a plan, emanating from Rector Agripino NUNEZ' office, which envisages the resumption of classes on a gradual basis beginning with students who are scheduled to graduate this year. During the week Rector Nuñez swore in a number of new university officials to replace those who had resigned earlier in protest against expulsion of six professors. Meeting on April 20, 69 professors of 80 attending and representing the Assembly of Professors, reportedly voted against the establishment of "party politics" on campus. --Despite tacit endorsement by most professors and students (who are interested in gaining credit for the semester), the so-called Unitary Committee, which has served as the spokesman for student demands, criticized the Rector's plan and those who have endorsed it "out of self-interest." (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment: Notwithstanding the "Unitary Committee," the muddled political-administrative crisis at UCMU appears to be moving toward a temporary solution which will permit the resumption of classes at least for students in their final year and perhaps for the entire student body. Whatever develops, however, the underlying problems at UCMU (i.e., the degree of student participation in administrative decisions, existence of student organizations -- particularly political -- on campus, and student-faculty resentment toward Rector Nuñez) will remain and could easily lead to renewed conflict in the future. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

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Page 67. Sixty-Mile Territorial Sea Limit Suggested.

At a meeting of the National Development Commission (CND) this week, Carlos SANCHEZ y SANCHEZ, President of the Dominican Consejo Nacional de Fronteras, expressed the opinion that the D.R. should extend its territorial waters to a limit of 60 miles (the present limit is six miles). The CND is studying proposals to prevent contamination of Dominican beaches and had been thought to favor extending the limit to 12 miles. Sanchez y Sanchez, however, advocated an extension that would prevent pollution of the beaches and be sufficient to "protect marine life." A sixty-mile territorial limit would include both the Silver and Navidad Banks, believed to be of potential importance to a revitalized Dominican fishing industry. (SD A-200, July, 1970). (UNCLASSIFIED)

8. Other Developments.

In other developments this week a) it was announced that the visit of Colombian Foreign Minister Alfredo VAZQUEZ Carrizosa originally scheduled for April 24 has been postponed until April 27; b) it was announced that the CIAP plenary session scheduled to open in Santo Domingo on May 3 has been postponed until May 31; and c) by week's end the National Police had knocked down most of the cardboard shacks which had been put up by a group of homeless persons in front of the Hotel Embajador. (UNCLASSIFIED)

It is reported that this invasion of private property was inspired by the government in order to nudge the Hotel's administration in the direction of landscaping and generally cleaning up the large barren areas in front of and to the west of the hotel. (CONFIDENTIAL)

MELOY *F.E.M.S.
per J.W.*

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